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	CIAE-00	COME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00	VCi-00	OBO-00	H-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	LAB-01	MOFM-00	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00
	NSCE-00	OES-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00
	GIWI-00	MA-00	ISNE-00	IRM-00	TRSE-00	NCTC-00	FMP-00
	CBP-00	R-00	EPAE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00
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R 031500Z NOV 09  
 FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
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 INFO AMCONSUL CALGARY  
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 AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
 AMCONSUL QUEBEC  
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UNCLAS OTTAWA 000836

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SENV](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR JACOBSON'S VISIT TO WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 18-20

¶1. Summary. Ambassador Jacobson's October 18-20 trip to Manitoba capitalized on Manitoba Premier Doer's preparation as Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. and the swearing-in of a new Premier, Greg Selinger. The headline read "New kids roll up their sleeves," and the atmosphere of good will, good intentions, and hard work prevailed through the trip.

¶2. Manitoba, occasionally the victim of an inferiority complex as the neighbor to richer Ontario, enjoyed its time in the spotlight as the home to the new Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. The Ambassador's visit ensured the spotlight shone even more brightly on Winnipeg as the new Premier took office. His meetings and social events introduced him to a range of Manitoba issues: trade, First Nations, human rights, border issues, water conflicts, and culture. End Summary

Meeting with Ambassador-Designate Gary Doer  
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¶3. Hours before then-Premier Gary Doer departed for Washington to take up his new post as Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., he met with Ambassador Jacobson on a Via Rail train traveling from Saskatoon to Winnipeg. In fact, he delayed his departure because of his eagerness to meet Ambassador Jacobson in Manitoba - boding well for the spirit of U.S.-Canadian cooperation here. The Via Rail meeting, which included spouses, was an important getting-acquainted session for two new ambassadors. In a setting which allowed Premier Doer to act as an informal tour guide to his province, the session moved smoothly between the personal and the political. Both ambassadors were able to offer advice and insight on their respective countries, strategies, and networks, and to discuss life in Ottawa and Washington informally. The meeting was an excellent (and somewhat cinematic) beginning to the Manitoba leg of the trip. On arrival at the Winnipeg train station, several onlookers remarked that it was refreshing to see "our two Ambassadors talk together like regular people" without an entourage or armed guards. This atmosphere of practicality, goodwill, and open communications set the tone for the rest of the trip.

¶4. In a frenetically busy weekend for the Manitoba government, the new premier was selected only the day before Ambassador Jacobson's arrival. Greg Selinger, the Premier-designate, invited Ambassador and Mrs. Jacobson to attend his October 19 swearing-in at the provincial legislature. Ambassador Jacobson's presence was acknowledged and many in the audience spoke with him; again, the willingness to acknowledge historical events and to celebrate milestones with Canadians sat very well with the press and the

public, as did Ambassador Jacobson's open admiration for the peaceful transfer of power.

15. Ambassador Jacobson met with Premier Selinger for breakfast on October 20, the Premier's first morning in office. Noting that they could "start literally on Day One," the Ambassador stated that he had no specific agenda in his Canadian tour and saw the trip as an opportunity to learn - whether the chance came from the cooks at The Chocolate Shop, the porters on the train, or the Premier himself.

16. On both Buy America and Country of Origin Labeling, the Ambassador stressed the preference for an amicable resolution over years of rancor and litigation. He noted the U.S.-Canada relationship is the largest trade relationship in the history of the world, saying the measure of the relationship is "whether we want to address issues straight on and find common ground." The countries' common interests also arose during the brief discussion on Devils Lake - in which the Ambassador described himself as familiar with the essential problem but not its complex technical aspects - and our sharing of water and air in the Great Lakes and other areas. Former Premier Doer's environmental credentials and his support for a North American-wide cap and trade program were stressed. As in other provincial meetings, the Ambassador described the twin issues of the environment and energy as being temporarily eclipsed by the health care debate in Congress.

17. Premier Selinger raised border issues, somewhat apologetically calling them "parochial," and noted delays at the Pembina-Emerson crossing. Ambassador Jacobson described the need for a balance of security and efficiency on both sides, and suggested that infrastructure improvements - which both Canada and the U.S. have undertaken to some pre-WWII structures - will mitigate delays. The Montreal preclearance facility, a \$300 million upgrade, exemplifies this approach.

18. The meeting was cordial and relaxed, with broad agreement to address the "little issues" that sometimes sting the warm bilateral relationship.

#### Canadian Museum for Human Rights

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19. Ambassador Jacobson met with several Board members of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) on October 19. He was briefed on the Museum's origins and purpose: to have a profound impact on the world through education on human rights issues, and secondarily as an economic development project for the "regularly insulted" City of Winnipeg. The driving desire is to offer visitors a powerful experience, equivalent to the Holocaust Museum in DC. CMHR, championed by former Premier Doer and the official opposition, is currently under construction based on plans by Newseum and Holocaust Museum architect Ralph Applebaum. Expected completion date is mid-2012. The project is experiencing serious cost overruns and the Board seeks an additional \$45 million infusion.

110. Gail Asper, CEO, pitched the CMHR as an international destination; foreign ambassadors posted to Canada have been contacted, and former U.S. Ambassador Cellucci held a networking event at his residence for CMHR. She suggested that Ambassador Jacobson's public support, particularly on a joint program with Ambassador Doer, would be extremely helpful. Based on the fact that Canadian arts and culture funding is significantly lower in the Western provinces than in the Eastern, Asper asked that the Ambassador promote CMHR when he meets Eastern premiers. She ended by making a strong plea for a Presidential endorsement and appearance at a Museum event.

#### Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

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111. Ambassador Jacobson met Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Grand Chief, Ron Evans, at an October 19 lunch meeting. Chief Evans, who represents 120-130,000 First Nations people in Manitoba, stated that aboriginal communities' biggest challenge is strengthening the

family unit, which is stressed by alcoholism, unemployment, and 8000 children currently in care. Lack of opportunity makes women and children, in particular, vulnerable to illness, crime and exploitation. Linked to this challenge is problematic access to health care and education; Chief Evans seeks support for programs to train First Nations youth in health care professions, following up on a University of Winnipeg partnership. Small and isolated First Nations communities face a critical shortage of doctors and poor transportation to hospitals.

¶12. Chief Evans seeks information on cooperative programs with the U.S., such as education exchanges with neighboring states. He and Ambassador Jacobson discussed the possibility of a binational discussion of First Nations issues, focused on Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota, to share best practices in both countries. He invited the Ambassador to visit the northern reserves to gain first-hand experience of conditions there; he has followed this up with a formal invitation offering to facilitate the Ambassador's visit to a remote Indian Reserve and to participate in the planning of a conference of First Nations leaders from the U.S. and Canada.

#### Other meetings in Winnipeg

¶13. Ambassador Jacobson toured the 1st Canadian Air Division facilities and museum at NORAD Canada Region Headquarters. He met Americans serving there, was briefed on the joint Canada-U.S. mission, and toured the Combined Air Operations Center. Prior to his airport departure he met U.S. Customs and Border protection personnel at Winnipeg's preclearance facility.

¶14. In a courtesy call on Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz, the Ambassador discussed city infrastructure issues and the revitalization of downtown. Mayor Katz, owner of the Winnipeg Goldeyes baseball team in the Northern League, invited the Ambassador to a game next spring. The Ambassador also called on Lieutenant Governor Philip Lee following the new Premier's swearing-in.

¶15. Ambassador Jacobson discussed trade and business issues in a reception hosted by the Business Council of Manitoba. Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, in addition to Canad Inns, Great West Life Assurance, and Tundra Oil and Gas were some of the 20 CEOs represented.

¶16. In a tightly packed day, Ambassador Jacobson also visited the Winnipeg Art Gallery to view the Karsh photography exhibit on loan from the Art Institute of Chicago and its world class collection of Inuit art. The latter is curated by a recent Voluntary Visitors program participant. Oct. 19 ended with attendance at a Manitoba Theatre Centre performance of the drama "Five O'Clock Bells."

#### Media

¶17. In addition to informal photo opportunities on arrival at the Via Rail station and at the Premier's swearing-in, the Ambassador was interviewed by Mary Agnes Welch of the Winnipeg Free Press and participated in a brief media scrum after his meeting with Premier Selinger. Though the Free Press reporter pre-billed the interview as a "getting to know you" session, the topics covered were the usual suspects: Devils Lake, border irritants, Buy America, Country of Origin Labeling. The unexceptional and rather flat article, titled "We can work it out," summarized the U.S. position on key issues and gave an overview of the Ambassador's Winnipeg visit.

¶18. On Oct. 21, the WFP ran a photo of the Ambassador with Premier Selinger accompanying a story about the new Premier's first day in office.

#### Comment

¶19. Ambassador Jacobson's visit elicited strong interest throughout Manitoba, and the Consulate was besieged with offers and invitations. The fact that Ambassador-Designate Doer delayed his

departure to Washington to meet Ambassador Jacobson, that Premier Selinger met him during his first five minutes in office, even that the Winnipeg Art Gallery opened its doors on a day off, speak volumes about this interest. The usual "irritants," including Devils Lake, border delays, Buy America and COOL, were largely swept aside by a wave of goodwill. On several occasions the Ambassador was asked to use his good offices and ties to President Obama to promote issues of provincial or federal interest, such as publicizing the Canadian Human Rights Museum, or to nudge state leaders to a more amenable position on water issues.

¶20. Suggestions for future visits to the province include a visit to a remote First Nations community, perhaps combined with a trip to Churchill to gain a firsthand impression of environmental issues in the far North; a visit with Premier Selinger to the symbolic International Peace Garden which straddles the U.S.- Canadian border; a site visit to Devils Lake and the Pembina Dike, perhaps with Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Gary Doer. END COMMENT

JACOBSON